

REMARKS

Claims 1, 2, 4, 6-11, 13-18, and 20-23 are pending in the present application after this amendment cancels claim 24. In view of the following remarks, favorable reconsideration of this application is respectfully requested.

Applicants note with appreciation that the Examiner has withdrawn the rejections of claims 1, 2, 4, 6-11, 13-18, and 20-23, and now indicates that these claims are allowable.

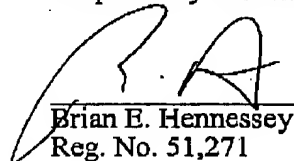
Claim 24 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 6,317,188 to Shibahara (hereinafter Shibahara) in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,953,087 to Hoyt (hereinafter Hoyt). With the cancellation of claim 24, it is respectfully submitted that this rejection is obviated.

CONCLUSION

In view of the remarks set forth above, this application is believed to be in condition for allowance which action is respectfully requested. However, if for any reason the Examiner should consider this application not to be in condition for allowance, the Examiner is respectfully requested to telephone the undersigned attorney at the number listed below prior to issuing a further Action.

Any fee due with this paper may be charged to Deposit Account No. 50-1290.

Respectfully submitted,



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